



STACKS

MAR 10 '52

PALMER LIBRARY  
CONNECTICUT COLLEGE  
NEW LONDON, CONN.

# PEQUOT TRAILS

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY IN THE SPRING, SUMMER, FALL AND WINTER  
BY THE PEQUOT-SEPOS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT

Volume IV

Spring, 1952

Number 1

## Karl Maslowski Presents "Earthquake Lake" Sun., Mar. 9



KARL MASLOWSKI

The next Audubon Screen Tour, a special Sunday matinee, will feature Karl Maslowski and his latest all-color motion picture "Earthquake Lake." It will be held at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, March 9, in Buell Hall, Williams Memorial Institute, New London.

Mr. Maslowski is recognized as one of our country's outstanding wildlife lecturers and photographers. His latest achievements include the taking of many of the wildlife scenes in Walt Disney's "Beavey Valley" and "Nature's Half Acre."

Of all America's natural wonders, none was more suddenly and strangely created than Reelfoot Lake, Tennessee. In the wild countryside of western Tennessee, a series of earthquakes in 1811 and 1812 formed a great chasm two miles wide and 12 miles long into which the waters of the Mississippi rushed to form the lake. This was in Audubon's time, and the great artist-naturalist, living then in Louisville, Kentucky, spoke of riding through one of these 'quakes and fearing he would not survive.

Today the borders of Reelfoot Lake are covered with great swamp forests in which cormorants, water turkeys, herons and egrets build their nests. This brilliant color film shows these

birds in their nesting colony, "Crane-town;" a spade foot toad that digs itself a hiding place in a mudbank in less than a minute; the southern swamp rabbit that is at home in water; the bird-voiced tree frog; a turtle laying its eggs; a night hunt for bullfrogs and flying squirrels; and the incredible three-toed Congo eel, our largest salamander, which looks like an eel, reaching a length of 40 inches.

This beautiful film, produced and personally presented by the well-known naturalist, Karl Maslowski, tells for the first time in color motion pictures the complete story of this fascinating wilderness area.

## Bird Identification Courses To Be Held in April

The Sanctuary will sponsor two elementary bird identification courses for adults this spring. One course will be held in the auditorium of Jennings School, New London, on Monday evenings, April 7, 14, 21, and 28. The other course will be held in the Westerly Public Library on Tuesday evenings, April 8, 15, 22, and 29. The courses will be identical and are being held in separate towns for the convenience of our members residing in those areas. All sessions will start at 7:30 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. The fifth and concluding session of each course will be a field trip. The time and place of these field trips will be decided by those attending the evening sessions in order to meet the convenience of the majority of those attending. The only charge for the course will be a one dollar registration fee.

Due to the popularity of this course last year, it is suggested that all members desiring to attend either course fill in the application blank on the last page of this issue and mail it to the Sanctuary as soon as possible. Should it become necessary to limit the number in each course, applications will be accepted in the order received.

## William Ferguson to Close 1951-52 Screen Tour Series



WILLIAM FERGUSON

William Ferguson, noted for his syndicated newspaper feature, "This Curious World," will close the Sanctuary's 1951-52 Audubon Screen Tour Series in Buell Hall on Thursday evening, April 3.

High on the eastern slopes of the Rockies, snows lie deep in winter, as reservoirs for summer days in the valleys below. And although the distance down to the valleys can be measured in thousands of feet, the differences in native animal and plant life are as great as though the extent were from Colorado to northern Canada.

Almost in strata, as one descends from the bare peaks, lie distinguishable zones of plant life; and living within each one, its own special inhabitants:

American pipits and brown-capped rosy finches abound in the tundras.

Conies and weasels in the boulder-strewn slopes.

Rocky Mountain jays and Clark's nutcrackers in the tall spruces farther down.

Western wood peewees, chickadees, western tanagers, red-naped sapsuck-

See "Ferguson"—Page 3

---

## PEQUOT TRAILS

Published quarterly, Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter, by the Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc., Mystic, Conn.

### Editors

Mrs. Arthur M. Cottrell, Jr. and  
Thomas P. McElroy, Jr.

### A Statement of Purpose:

We want this publication to be of the utmost service to you—to keep you informed concerning activities at the Sanctuary and in your community; to invite your participation in these activities; and to provide you with general articles of education and inspiration regarding conservation subjects. Won't you drop us a line and tell us what you would like to see published? We would appreciate it.

---

## An Invitation

With the publication of this issue, we are starting our fourth year of publishing our quarterly bulletin, PEQUOT TRAILS. During these past three years your editors have endeavored to keep you posted on Sanctuary activities and topics of current conservation interest, and at the same time, include same educational articles on various phases of natural history. We hope we have succeeded in our purpose. However, we feel that we could improve our bulletin, from both the news and educational angles, if more of our members would contribute news items and articles.

We are interested in your birding observations—what field trips you take, what you see, what birds you have around your feeding stations, what success you are having with nesting boxes, and similar allied subjects. We would also appreciate short articles on any special nature interest you may have. Perhaps you are keenly interested in minerals, insects, plants, aquatic life, trees, mammals, or similar phases of natural history. If you are, won't you share your interest and knowledge with the rest of our members by writing us an article for publication in one of our forthcoming issues. In this way, through the cooperation of our members, your editors feel that we can make this publication a lot more interesting and beneficial.

---

## Sanctuary Has New Trail Map

Thanks to the insistence and generosity of our chief trailmaster, George B. Utter, we now possess a new and accurate trail map of the Sanctuary. This map shows all the Sanctuary's main trails and all the shorter connecting ones. It also shows ledges, streams, swamps, and other physical features of the property. The maps will be available in the Trailside Museum and distributed freely to all those desiring to use the Sanctuary's trails.

## Notes on Weeds

(From an article to appear in The New York State Conservationist)

by Adele Erisman

Anyone fortunate enough to live near a weedy field during this snowy month has discovered for himself the beauty of weed patterns in the snow and seen how the birds feed eagerly on such plants as evening primrose and the stiffer grasses.

Weeds tell a different story to every one who looks at them. The soil expert finds evidence of fertility in such weed indicators as robust dandelion and buttercup, sow thistle and groundsel. Whereas the ubiquitous cinquefoils, sheep sorrel, crabgrass and hawkweed mean the land is poor and eroded. Mosses abound in acid soils and beggar ticks grow where drainage is poor.

A new book called "Weeds: Guardians of the Soil" by Coccanaueer suggests that the gardener leave a few large weeds growing among his vegetables on the theory that the weeds forage deeply for chemicals which they then make available to the cultivated plants, at the same time opening up the subsoil for the more tender rooted plants to penetrate and even offering some shade for delicate seedlings. The affinity of ragweed and corn has often been noted. There are undoubtedly many more.

Most of the plants we have come to detest were brought over here originally for their medicinal properties, cultivated for that purpose, then grew out of hand. Our worst plant pests today are introductions from Europe and Asia of which there are over a thousand kinds.

The ox-eye daisies were introduced from Europe and valued as a tonic and a cure for whooping cough, asthma and nervous excitability. Cinquefoil was used for treating fevers, hemorrhages and bleeding gums among other things. Yarrow was supposed to cure the wounds of soldiers. Common plantain, ugliest duckling of them all, hated by everyone but house sparrows, was used as a cure for snakebite and hence called snakeweed, while the Indians called it "white-man's footsteps" for obvious reasons.

Anyone who has ever seen that delightful little insect, the goldbug, looks with favor on the obstreperous bindweed upon which it feeds. (A search near haircap moss yields another treasure. Growing in relation to it one often finds the beautiful bronze-leaved grape fern with its fruiting frond standing up fresh and arresting in the middle of winter.)

Weeds have been a source of food since history began. The young shoots of pokeweed taste something like asparagus. Nettle and chickweed are said to be good. And even young fresh

shoots of greenbrier can be cooked like string beans. The tips of milkweed are a real treat.

No garden club enthusiast has failed to note the virtues of dry weeds for winter bouquets and, I hope, never fails to put that bouquet outdoors again in March to feed the hungry birds.

The spread of noxious weeds can best be controlled by disturbing the soil as little as possible. The new homebuilder would be wise to curb the use of the bulldozer on his land particularly when he has woodland to work with, for the weeds worst enemy is the forest. Once the ground cover is destroyed, and the soil pushed around, then the weeds come in. Once in, they are harder to get rid of than they are to prevent in the first place. Besides nothing makes better landscaping around a home than the natural woodland plants thinned lightly and pruned to favor the best and most attractive species.

---

## "It's a Wonderful World"

Snow time is bird time, and the word has gotten around that there is good eating at Laurel Glen.

"A cardinal turned up yesterday morning," says Carrington Howard. "This solitary, judicial figure in his gorgeous red suit was an odd contrast to the crowd of active little juncos, tree sparrows and English sparrows that he was in the middle of, eating small seeds on the ground under the apple tree.

"Later he whistled a bit, too, somewhat under his breath, but loud enough to call your attention to him as he sat in a snow covered shrub and looked on.

"A flock of about fifty evening grosbeaks landed in the apple tree and then went to work in the sunflower seeds on the feeding stations, pushing and shoving each other around as if there wasn't going to be enough to go around. They seldom come singly.

"A Towhee was on hand not long after that, and being so used to scratching up the leaves, with both feet at a time, he kept scratching the snow, and thereby covering up the very seeds he was after. But he kept at it and apparently got a breakfast or he wouldn't be coming back.

"A funny little 'honk' up the tree said that a white breasted nuthatch was on his way down. He always comes down the trunk head first, with his long sharp bill, (which looks as if he had it on upside down) held out at right angles to the trunk.

"He comes for peanut butter smeared into a spruce cone, and for sunflower seeds, too, although we seldom see him eat these. He takes them and jams them down into the bark to be discovered later, held tight in the vise for easy cracking. When the snow was driving in from the East we saw one

See "World"—Page 3

## Membership Totals, March 1, 1952

ARE YOU		Regular	Contributing	Sustaining	Life	Total
HERE or	<i>Paid</i>	337	130	5	3	475
HERE?	<i>Due</i>	60	19	1	0	80
	<i>Total</i>	397	149	6	3	555

### Bird Notes

Some of the interesting reports from our members about birds visiting their winter feeding stations include the following:

Carrington Howard reports a male cardinal as a regular visitor to his feeding station in North Stonington.

Cardinals have also been reported in New London by Mrs. Horace Rowe and Mrs. Harold Pond.

Mrs. John B. Findlay reports a wintering yellow-breasted chat.

Mrs. R. O. Erisman has a pair of Carolina wrens as regular customers at her window feeder.

Mrs. Jerome Anderson has been feeding a pair of brown thrashers all winter.

A lone snow goose is spending the winter on Harkness Pond in Waterford.

Evening grosbeaks are abundant at all feeding stations.

Towhees have been reported from half a dozen feeding stations.

The Sanctuary's wintering list includes a lone catbird and a female towhee. Two fox sparrows and at least one Carolina wren have been around all winter, also. Grosbeaks have been abundant and ravenous.

### Ferguson

(Continued from Page One)

ers, hummingbirds, in the pines and aspens of the mountain zone.

Rock wrens bobbing up and down from their granite lookouts.

Insects and flowers . . . moths emerging in glory; ants milking their herds of aphid cows.

Mule deer and elk showing off their antlers; chipmunks playing pranks for fun.

The inhabitants of these lofty Rocky Mountain areas, whether animal, bird or human, live in worlds apart from others. The Blackfoot Indian performs dances his forefathers learned from soaring hawks and eagles. And in the sage country of the foothills, gold which once came literally from the earth now grows in the form of golden grain on rich lands fed by waters of the high horizons . . . gold mines of life that will continue to be productive so long as man uses them wisely.

William Ferguson makes this story of life in the Rockies as colorful in the telling as his action films were in the taking.

### Trading Post Items

The Sanctuary's Trading Post offers numerous items for sale that may help supply your needs and those of your friends, for example, with the nesting season just around the corner, we have made up a supply of bird houses we think you will like—we know the birds will because they have used them successfully here at the Sanctuary for the past several nesting seasons. These boxes are well made of western cedar and rust-proof hardware. They are easily opened for cleaning purposes. Two types are available, one for wrens and another for bluebirds or tree swallows. Both types of boxes sell for \$3.50 each.

In addition to bird boxes, the Trading Post can supply you with bird feed, bird feeders, note paper, and autographed copies of our curator's book, "Handbook of Attracting Birds." Although the Trailside Museum does not open officially until May, these items are available at the Sanctuary now.

### World

(Continued from Page Two)

nuthatch sitting in the lee of a robin's nest up near the top of the tree.

"With an entirely different technique, a male downy woodpecker (with the red patch on the back of his neck) came hitching down the tree backwards. While bound eventually for the suet fastened to the trunk, he spent much time looking for grubs in the bark, swaying from side to side as he looked, and acting as if the suet were quite incidental to the trip down, which it really isn't.

"The cutest of the lot, the black capped chickadees, are always on the alert, and waiting for the grosbeaks to leave, so they can dart in and grab a sunflower seed to take off to some branch, where they can crack it open. Of course, it always has to be a new supply, for the hungry grosbeaks never leave a crumb. They shell theirs in their heavy beaks, right where they stand to eat. The chickadees ran sort of an airlift today. Seven of them coming in one after another to land on my hand stuck out the window, for long enough to grab a seed.

"It's a wonderful world if we see what's to be seen." Reprinted with permission of the Western Sun.

### Poster Contest Winners

Washington, D. C.—Douglas Allen, an artistic student of Lincoln high school in Jersey City, N. J., is \$250 richer today. He won first prize in the senior high school division of the annual conservation poster contest sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation announced in the last issue of Pequot Trails.

Young Allen's poster, which was scored at the top of 791 entries from 41 states and the District of Columbia, was an oil painting done with near-professional skill and dramatic simplicity. It portrayed a bull moose beside two tall pine trees against a background in two shades of blue. Its slogan was: "A Part of Your America—PRESERVE IT!"

David Barclay, 3737 East 142nd Street, Cleveland, Ohio, won top honors and \$100 in the junior high school division. His poster, done with tempera water paint, was selected by the judges largely because of its striking originality. Its theme of fire prevention was carried out with a doe and fawn against a stylized forest background in black, brown and green. Fire causes were suggested by an inset match and cigarette from which flame was springing. The slogan was: "They're Innocent . . . Are You?"

Judges of the contest were Dr. Clarence Cottam, assistant chief, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; C. R. Gutermuth, vice-president, Wildlife Management Institute, and Fred Packard, executive-secretary, National Parks Association. Both the number of entries and general quality of posters were the highest in the 15-year history of the contest, according to National Wildlife Federation officers.

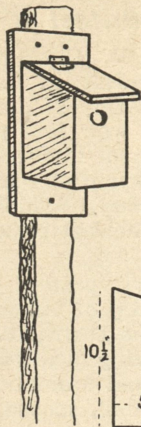
### An Idea for Your Vacation

Here's a new idea for that vacation of yours. Why not spend a couple of really enjoyable weeks at the Audubon Nature Camp in Maine? You will get fun, recreation, and education such as you have never enjoyed before. You will be housed in comfortable quarters and fed the best of food. The staff of leaders are the best in their field.

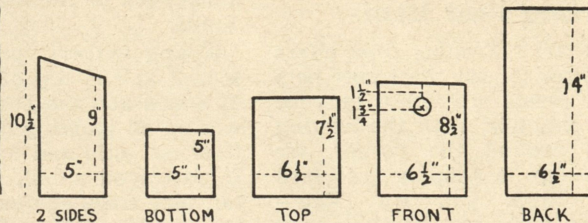
The Audubon Nature Camp is for adults with either a professional or hobby interest in nature. Here you will participate in fascinating field trips and boat trips to remote islands on the coast. You will receive practical program aids for use in schools, clubs, and camps. And, incidentally, our Sanctuary would benefit by your having attended the camp.

A post card addressed to the National Audubon Society at 1000 Fifth Ave., New York 22, N. Y., will bring full particulars.

## It's Nesting Time



Here's an easily constructed nesting box that will be accepted readily by bluebirds and tree swallows.



You may recognize this diagram and article as being similar to the ones we ran in our first issue three years ago. Due to their success at that time, and to the fact that the need is still urgent, we are repeating them here hoping that still more members will take part in this program.

Bluebirds need help. The lack of natural nesting cavities, and the competition from starlings and English sparrows have started a downward trend in our bluebird population. We can help them by providing nesting boxes similar to the one diagrammed above. In construction, you will notice that the upper edge of the roof is cut at an angle to fit flush with the backboard. The top of the front is cut at an angle to fit flush with the roof. Drill a drainage hole in the bottom and ventilation holes under the eaves of the roof.

For best results, bluebird houses should be placed in the open on a post from 5 to 8 feet in height.

Your bird houses should be put up

during the month of March. Baby bluebirds have been observed in Sanctuary nesting boxes as early as the 25th of March. Male house wrens will soon arrive and start building a series of false nests that "Mrs. Wren" will promptly tear down and rebuild upon arrival. Phoebes are starting to arrive from the South and will welcome a nesting shelf under the eaves of your porch or garage. Tree swallows arrive a little later and will use the same box as bluebirds. You can keep your chickadees, nuthatches, and woodpeckers around by providing them with a rustic log-type of house.

Providing supplementary nesting materials is an added incentive for birds to nest in your garden. A crude wire basket or rack filled with short pieces of string, yarn, cotton, thread, etc., is a good way of supplying this material. Baltimore orioles, chipping sparrows, robins, catbirds, and thrushes will be among the various species that will use this assortment of nesting materials.

## Legislative Report

While it has always been the policy of the Sanctuary, and of all its publications, to purposefully avoid taking sides on any issue of a political nature, we do think it advisable, however, to keep you posted as to legislation of current conservation interest. It is for you to decide whether or not you think the proposed legislation is beneficial and to take any action you may desire in accordance with this belief.

### SENATE GETS NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION BILL

H. R. 565—Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee has introduced an improved version of the so-called Tackett Bill providing for a share of the National Forest receipts to be set aside for the development and management of recreational facilities and resources, including wildlife, within the forests. Congressman Tackett's bill, H. R. 565, now resting in a pigeonhole in the Forestry, earmarks 10 per cent of forestry receipts for recreational and wildlife purposes. The McKellar bill earmarks 25 per cent!

### STATE CONTROL OF WILDLIFE ON PUBLIC LANDS

S-2403—Senator A. Willis Robertson of Virginia has introduced a bill which would settle the growing controversy over ownership and control of wildlife on military reservations and other federal lands. His bill, S. 2403, would not throw such lands open if the federal authorities feel no hunting or fishing should be done there. It does plainly say, however, that if any hunting or fishing is done, it must be done according to the laws of the state in which the area is located.

### COMMERCIAL FISHING

H. R. 5883 IMPORT DUTIES ON TUNA FISH—Mr. Russell V. Mack (Wash.) This bill is similar to several introduced in the 1951 session. Imposes an import duty of 45 per cent ad valorem on tuna fish when packed in airtight containers weighing not more than 15 pounds, gross weight. Referred to House Committee on Ways and Means 1/8/52.

## Calendar of Events

March 9—Audubon Screen Tour, Karl Maslowski presents "Earthquake Lake" in Buell Hall at 3:00 p.m.  
April 3—Audubon Screen Tour, William Ferguson presents "High Horizons" in Buell Hall at 8:00 p.m.  
April 7-14-21-28—Bird Identification Course, Jennings School, New London.  
April 8-15-22-29 — Bird Identification Course, Westerly Public Library.  
May—Field trips and Trailside Museum opening. Details will be made available later through a special announcement.

## APPLICATION FOR BIRD IDENTIFICATION COURSE

Sponsored by  
**Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary**  
**MYSTIC, CONN.**

Date .....

(See identification article in this issue)

Please enroll me in the Bird Identification Course checked below:

- ☐ Jennings School, New London, April 7, 14, 21, and 28.  
☐ Public Library, Westerly, April 8, 15, 22, and 29.

Name .....

Address .....

- ☐ \$1.00 registration fee enclosed.  
☐ \$1.00 registration fee will be paid at first session.